



Sustained Commitment to the Border Region

For decades, despite heavy needs, the border region of Texas has not received adequate attention from the federal government. Since his election in 2002, Senator John Cornyn has joined with Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison in bringing long-overdue focus to issues ranging from health care, trade, transportation, and agriculture to infrastructure development and security. These issues affect all Texans.

Improving Transportation, Infrastructure & Commerce

- ✓ Sponsored the **Emergency Port of Entry Personnel & Infrastructure Funding Act** to reduce border inspection times by constructing additional inspection lanes at ports of entry in Texas and authorizing Customs and Border Protection to hire more inspectors.
- ✓ Introduced legislation **ensuring that every truck that enters the U.S. through the Cross-Border Motor Carrier Demonstration Program be inspected** and meet all safety standards established for U.S. commercial motor vehicles.
- ✓ Strong supporter of the development of **Interstate 69**, a future major artery for commerce and travel from the Rio Grande Valley to Houston and beyond, and helped secure it more than \$15 million.
- ✓ Helped obtain regulatory clearances and \$2.8 million for the **West Rail Bypass & Relocation Plan** to consolidate and relocate major NAFTA freight routes away from population centers in Brownsville and Harlingen.
- ✓ Secured increased funding for the **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program**, which benefits housing development in many border communities.

Cornyn Supported Funding & Initiatives:

- \$1 million for improvements to the **Pharr International Bridge**.
- \$7.4 million for construction of inspection and administrative facilities at **Anzalduas International Crossing**.



- \$2.4 million to **increase access to public transportation for colonias residents** via the Job Access and Reverse Commute Initiative.
- **Development and expansion of new trade corridors**, including \$5 million for the **Ports to Plain Trade Corridor** and \$3 million for **La Entrada al Pacifico Trade Corridor**.
- \$3 million for the **El Paso Bus Replacement Program**.
- \$100,000 for upgrades to the **Edinburg Airport**.

Sen. Cornyn's economic development work has been widely recognized

Hidalgo Chamber of Commerce's
Border Texan of Year for 2005

Texas Association of Mexican-American Chambers of Commerce's
(TAMACC) **International Leadership Legislative Award**

Border Trade Alliance
Award recognizing his support of trade and travel along the border

- Worked with FEMA to expedite a federal disaster declaration following the tornado that hit Eagle Pass and Maverick County in 2007.
- Convened a field hearing of the Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works' Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee in Brownsville to address critical transportation needs in the Rio Grande Valley.

Addressing Water & Flood Control Issues

- ✓ Supported a locally-created proposal to use **flood control levees** as a part of DHS' border fencing plans and has introduced legislation requiring a DHS report on the idea. Senator Cornyn requested that Secretary Chertoff give personal consideration to the proposal.



- ✓ Enacted legislation requiring DHS to pursue eradication of **Carrizo Cane, Salt Cedar** and **Russian Olive** to allow an increased flow of water in the Rio Grande River, assist border enforcement efforts, and reduce the need for more invasive security measures in some border areas.

- ✓ Pushed administration officials to ensure that significant **federal water conservation funding** be used in Texas water districts

hardest hit by limited flow from Mexico. Subsequently, the NAD Bank announced \$25 million for water conservation projects in the Valley.

- ✓ Successfully pressed the State Department to **hold Mexico accountable for its overdue water debt**, which has subsequently been repaid.

Cornyn Supported Project Funding:

- \$11 million for the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant in El Paso.
- \$3 million for the Brownsville Weir water supply project.
- \$6.9 million to Texas A&M University to study agricultural irrigation in the Rio Grande Basin and to help area farmers implement water conservation techniques.
- \$175,000 to the Lower Rio Grande Basin study for border colonias.
- \$10 million for the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Levee Rehabilitation Project.
- \$500,000 for a feasibility study of the Raymondville Drain.
- \$800,000 to the Friends of the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge for land acquisitions.

Increasing Access to Health Care

- ✓ Introduced legislation to provide **veterans hospital care in South Texas.**
- ✓ Supported federal **reimbursement of local hospitals and health care providers** for treatment of undocumented immigrants.
- ✓ Cosponsored the **U.S. Border Health Security Act of 2007** to award grants to improve border residents' health, establish a health alert system to identify emerging diseases along the border area, and to study the binational public health infrastructure and health insurance efforts.



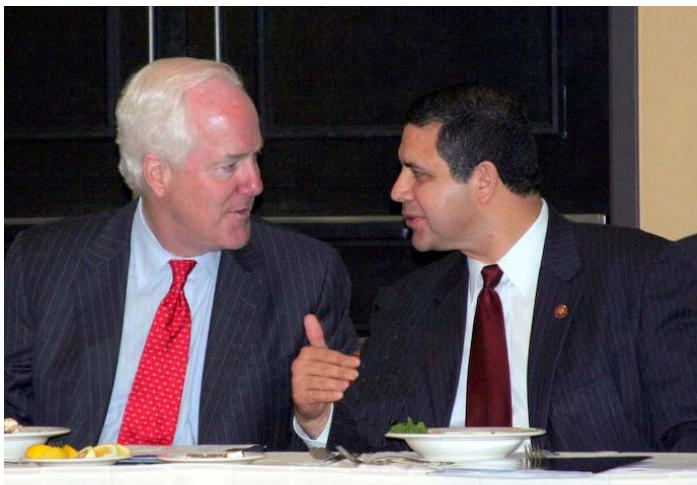
Cornyn Supported Project Funding:

- Secured \$1.3 million for the **U.S. Hispanic Nutrition Research and Education Center**, based in Harlingen, to study the role nutrition and diet play in maintaining health, and preventing chronic disease in the U.S. Hispanic population.
- Obtained \$300,000 for the **Brownsville Community Health Center** to establish medical research and education facilities in the lower Rio Grande Valley.

- Supported **Federally Qualified Health Clinics** grants, including \$426,000 for the **Brownsville** Community Health Center; \$278,000 for the Centro de Salud Familiar la Fe in **El Paso**; \$509,000 for the Gateway Community Health Center in **Laredo**; \$477,000 for the Centro San Vicente in **El Paso**; \$320,000 for the Su Clinica Familiar in **Harlingen**; and \$260,000 for the Nuestra Clinica del Valle in **Pharr**.
- Helped secure \$350,000 for the University of Texas-Medical Branch for tele-health initiatives serving clinics in Texas cities, including **Brownsville**.

Expanding Educational Opportunities

- ✓ Supported the College Cost Reduction and Access Act that by 2011 will **raise the maximum Pell Grant** from \$4,050 to \$6,300 and **reduce interest rates** on certain federal student loans from 6.8% to 3.4%.



- ✓ Introduced legislation to extend the \$4,000 deduction for college tuition, helping those struggling to put their children through college.
- ✓ Cosponsored the College 529 Invest in Education Savings for Tomorrow Act of 2005 to assist families of all income levels saving for future college costs.
- ✓ Visited numerous leading educational institutions along the

border, including Texas A&M International University in Laredo, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in El Paso, Laredo Community College, Texas State Technical College in Harlingen, and UT Brownsville to assess educational needs and issues.

Cornyn Supported Project Funding:

- **\$750,000** for the **Laredo Community College** childcare program.
- **\$337,000** for **Project Arriba** in El Paso for long-term high skilled job training.
- Grants for job training programs, including more than \$700,000 for **South Texas College**, \$1.9 million for **Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde**, and \$2 million for **Texas State Technical College in Harlingen**.
- \$11.9 million Head Start grant for the **Texas Migrant Council in Laredo** to ensure children are well prepared for elementary school.

Enhancing Public Safety

- ✓ Introduced legislation authorizing \$100 million for local border law enforcement grants to reimburse law enforcement officials who participate in immigration training initiatives including identifying, processing and detaining offenders.
- ✓ Supported an increase in funding for the **State Criminal Alien Assistance Program** (SCAAP) to reimburse local law enforcement for the cost associated with detaining criminal aliens.
- ✓ Introduced legislation requiring that a portion of funding for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement be made available for foreign law enforcement authorities, including Mexico, to **locate missing or kidnapped Americans** in areas affected by violent drug trafficking.



Senator Cornyn received the Texas Border & Southwestern Border Sheriff's Coalitions' Champion of Border Security Award

- ✓ Convened the Senate Judiciary Committee's Border Security and Citizenship Subcommittee to find solutions for gang-related violence along the border region.

Cornyn Supported Project Funding and Initiatives:

- \$225,000 for Texas Engineering Extension Service for the Enhanced Spanish Communication Training Program for Emergency Responders.
- \$200,000 for Border Interoperable Enforcement Network to ensure that local first responders along the border and the Lower Gulf Intracoastal Waterway can share critical public safety information.
- \$300,000 for upgrades to El Paso's interoperable communications system.
- Legislation naming the U.S. Courthouse in Brownsville in honor of federal judges Reynaldo G. Garza and Filemon B. Vela.

Modernizing Border Security & Immigration

- ✓ Introduced the **Comprehensive Enforcement and Immigration Reform Act of 2005** that would increase border security, add \$5 billion over 5 years for technology and other resources, and provide for a temporary worker program that requires countries to enter bi-lateral agreements with the U.S. Cosponsored an amended version of this legislation in 2007.

- ✓ Cosponsored amendments requiring DHS to consult with state and local entities during border security upgrades and requiring DHS to publicly disclose locations that would likely require fencing.
- ✓ Cosponsored the **Border Infrastructure and Technology Modernization Act** to hire additional Customs and Border Protection inspectors and agents, and mandate port of entry infrastructure assessments.



- ✓ Secured extension for visitors using the laser visa program (temporary, fully screened travelers from Mexico) from three to thirty days per visit. Additionally, introduced the **Secure Border Crossing Card Entry Act of 2007** to further extend the duration from 30 days to 6 months (the same length of stay as visitors from Canada).



- ✓ Co-hosted meetings with Senator Hutchison and DHS Secretary Chertoff with Texas border community leaders in Washington to facilitate improved communication between local officials and the department. Also, hosted Secretary Chertoff in Laredo for meetings with local officials and business leaders.

- ✓ Worked to resolve State Department problems experienced while

implementing the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI); held a field hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee's Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship Subcommittee in Laredo to examine the impact on trade and tourism of WHTI; and supported legislation extending the date of implementation of WHTI from 2007 to 2009.

- ✓ Introduced the SKIL bill to reform temporary worker and permanent immigration programs to facilitate America's ability to retain highly qualified professionals. Also, supported legislation to authorize a one-time increase of 115,000 visas for aliens working in specialized fields.

**Senator Cornyn received the
National Coalition of Latino Clergy &
Christian Leaders'
2006 Latino Leadership Award**

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